

Bloug.  
C659  
1900

YALE  
MEDICAL LIBRARY



HISTORICAL LIBRARY

*The Gift of*

MISS CARMALT





# EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF DR. MASON FITCH COGSWELL.

COMPILED FROM ANNOTATIONS OF REV. DR. LEONARD BACON

BY ELLEN STRONG BARTLETT.

## PART I.

**I**T is to that inexplicable magic of events that sometimes baffles us, that the following precious and interesting manuscript owes its restoration to the land of its origin.

Written in 1787, by the Dr. Cogswell, who afterwards achieved such a position in Hartford, and was, through his daughter so intimately connected with the establishment of instruction for the Deaf and Dumb, it gives the pleasant incidents of a horseback journey among those noble old Connecticut families, whose names are still cherished among us. These way-side notes were evidently written for the pleasure of personal recollection and with no thought of the public or the future.

Oblivion has fallen on their travels and their hiding-places for the following seventy years; but no mystery of the concealment of those yellow pages could be more remarkable than the place and circumstances of their discovery and restoration, for they were found among absolute strangers in a southern state, and were returned to the very family connection therein described. It was thus:

Of the three sons of the Rev. Dr. Leonard Bacon, who were in our army during the Civil War, two were at the siege and capture of Richmond. One of

them was afterwards instrumental in returning to a southerner a certain record book which was desired. In the course of the acknowledgments of the courtesy, in the shape of newspapers, historical pamphlets, etc. sent to Dr. Bacon there appeared a soiled and torn manuscript, which it was suggested might be of "local interest to Connecticut people!" But the strangest part of the story is that the diary was found among the papers of an old Presbyterian divine, the Rev. John D. Blair, who preached with acceptance for years in Richmond. A singular arrangement existed, whereby he and an Episcopal minister used the same hall of the House of Delegates, for religious services on alternate Sundays.

He was born in Pennsylvania, of Scotch-Irish parentage, and was educated in Pennsylvania, acquiring "doubtless" an orthodox prejudice against New England Divinity and an old-time Pennsylvanian dislike of Yankees generally. To quote Dr. Bacon, "It was among the papers of this Scotch-Irish Presbyterian minister, born and educated in Western Pennsylvania and domiciled for more than thirty years or more in Virginia, that our manuscript was found. How it came there is a mystery, for Mr. Blair is in no way



related to Connecticut or to New England. How it happened to remain there—why it was not taken for waste paper—why it did not go as a minister's old sermons ordinarily go after his decease is another mystery.

"The first leaf (if no more) is missing ; and at the top of what I suppose to have been the third page, we find the diarist recording that he 'went to bed and slept luxuriously after supping plenteously on sweetmeats and cream pompion pie and br.dal kisses.' Evidently he had been at a wedding. Then comes a date, 'Friday, 14th,' with no mention of the month or year, but with the record, 'slept late in the morning on account of the wedding, made several morning calls—wished the bride more joy—got my horse shod and set out for Norwalk, where I made a cousinly visit and ate, drank and slept for nothing. In the evening called on Miss C——n, who treated me with friendly attention, unaffected smiles and sprightly wine—the last she gave with a good will'."

The next day ("Saturday, 15th") we find him setting out early in the morning. "Rode to Greenfield," he says, "and breakfasted with Mr. Dwight." This was the Rev. Timothy Dwight of Greenfield, Conn., who was a grandson of Jonathan Edwards and who was from 1795 to 1817 the light and the pride of New Haven.

The diary goes on: "Staid much longer than I intended to. I however forgave myself very readily when I considered the cause of the detention." Dr. Bacon explains that "the pastor of Greenfield Hill was like Coleridge's Ancient Mariner in the power of fascinating even a wedding guest and holding him fast." Our wedding guest (for so we may call him) escaped in time to dine at Stratford where he seems to have had friends, but found nobody at home, and thence he

pushed on to New Haven. He makes no mention of the ferry across the Housatonic, but evidently the day was far spent before he was on the Milford side of the river. "The last part of the ride," he says, "was solitary, as it was in the evening, but it was better calculated for reflection. I was drawing nigh to the seat of my former pleasures, the recollection of a thousand happy circumstances crowded round my heart and awakened some of its choicest emotions. In this way was the gloom of the evening forgotten, and the tediousness of ten long miles entirely lost." In this sentimental mood he arrives at New Haven, an hour perhaps after the Saturday sunset. "Unwilling to sit down and spend the remainder of the evening with strangers, grog-bruizers, etc.," he says, "I immediately went in pursuit of my old friend Leander, but he was, unfortunately for me, out of town on a tour of duty. Not satisfied with a single attempt, I repaired to Mr H——s, and the very friendly reception I met with from everyone secured me as a guest. My portmanteau was sent for and I was made as happy as I wished to be. After answering all the questions that were asked me in as satisfactory a manner as I could, I retired to my couch and slept in peace."

Dr. Bacon fails to find a clue for "Leander," but he feels sure that Mr. H—— was "Captain" James Hillhouse, then living at the head of Temple Street. Though still a young man, he was already eminent among his fellow citizens, and his house was always a center of hospitality. It was there, we may believe, that our traveler was sleeping that Saturday night.

His next day's record begins thus: "Sunday 30th. Attended Divine service in the forenoon at the Brick, and heard a solid discourse from Dr. Dana; in the afternoon, my old place of worship, the

Chapel, was honored with my presence, where I was highly entertained with a sermon from Dr. Edwards, from these words: 'In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' The discourse was accompanied with good music." Thus far the diary has given us no mention of the month in which it was written, but looking forward for dates, we find that "Sunday, 30th" is followed by "Monday, Dec. 1st." Dr. Bacon took the trouble to examine the diary of President Stiles in the College Library, and was rewarded by finding therein that on Nov. 16, 1788, Mr. Morse, who had been called to the church in Charlestown, Mass., preached in the forenoon in the College Chapel, and that in the afternoon Dr. Edwards, pastor of the White Haven Church in the Blue Meeting-house exchanging pulpits with Dr. Wales, Professor of Divinity in Yale College, preached in the afternoon from Gen. II, 17, 'In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' If a sermon from Jonathan Edwards could be familiarly described as "highly entertaining," what must have been the "solid discourse" of Dr. Dana?

So the question of month and year is settled and a search in the town records of Stamford shows that on the thirteenth of November, 1788, David Holley and Martha Coggeshall were married by Col. Abraham Davenport; and thus the imagination may supply the missing beginning of the diary. Dr. Bacon goes on with the account: "Our traveler spent the evening at Dr. Stiles'," whose house (his official residence) was on the spot now covered by the College Street Church. He had a pleasant time that Sunday evening. His record is, 'The ladies are the same as when I was last at New Haven, Amelia somewhat indisposed and consequently deprived of a part of her volubility. She was quite as agreeable,

however as she used to be. The circumstance of meeting Messrs. Fitch and Morse added considerably to the pleasures of the evening.'

This "Mr. Morse" was no other than the "Father of American Geography," Jedidiah Morse, the father also of the inventor of the telegraph and "Mr. Fitch" was then one of the college tutors, and was afterwards the first president of Williams College.

Dr. Bacon goes on: "We are becoming acquainted with the writer of this dingy manuscript, though as yet we have no indication of what his name was. He employed himself the next day, Monday, 17th, in visiting old friends, feeling happy himself and endeavoring to make others so." Evidently there was sunshine in his face all day; and his diary tells us how the day ended. 'In the evening joined a party of about twenty couples at Mr. Mix's and danced till about twelve.' At Mr. Mix's, where was that? The house remains to this day in good condition, though of course not without some changes internal and external. Through a series of years it was my own 'hired house'; and to this day I never pass by it without a tender remembrance of those busy, anxious and happy years."

"It is on Elm Street, next below the first Methodist Church. Devout old ladies venerable as the 'elect lady' to whom—as the Apostle John addressed one of his Epistles—have told me how they, in the 'auld lang syne' have danced in the ballroom there, which was at the eastern side of the house, on the second floor, and which in my day had been divided into two apartments. But where are the 'twenty couple' who met there?

"To chase the flying hours with glowing feet,' Nov. 17, 1788. They seem to have had a lively time. Our genial friend records his own enjoyment of the evening:

'I was never in a room before with so many good dancers, not an indifferent dancer in the room. Miss S---s, B---s, B---w, and E---s were alternately honored with my hand. I did my best to persuade them that I was a good partner. I retired to my couch with comfortable reflections and a good appetite for sleep.'

"Can we make out the four names which are indicated by initial and final letters? Miss S---s is evidently Miss Stiles, a daughter of the president. Miss B---s is probably Miss Beers, but I cannot identify her. Miss B---w was perhaps a stranger. Miss E---s is Miss Edwards. I knew her when her dancing days were over, and when the beauty of youth had become the dignity of an honored matron. She was Mrs. Johnson of Stratford, the elder sister of the late venerable Mrs. Whitney. Herself a grand-daughter of the world-famous theologian, Jonathan Edwards, who died president of a Presbyterian college at Princeton, her husband was a grandson of Samuel Johnson, the founder of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, and president of King's, (now Columbia) College in New York. Herself the daughter of the brilliant lawyer, Pierpont Edwards, her husband was the son of a more illustrious lawyer, William Samuel Johnson.

"The next day, 'Tuesday, 18th,' our traveler records that he 'breakfasted with Samuel Broome, was treated with hospitality by the whole family, and set out to Hartford with him.' The Triennial Catalogue of Yale College shows that Samuel Platt Broome graduated A. B. in the class of 1786: that he was admitted to the same degree in the college at Princeton the same year, and that he died in 1811. At the date then, of the journal before us, he was a graduate of two years standing; and we may be sure that there was not in New Haven a young man

whose prospects in relation to wealth were so brilliant as his. For a considerable period, the firm of Broome & Platt was more conspicuous in the commerce of New Haven than any other. The two partners lived near each other in what we call East Water Street, where one of their dwellings remains to this day, and in those two houses there was probably more of the luxury and display of wealth, more of 'dash' and 'fashion' than anywhere else this side of New York. There was between the two families some alliance by marriage, and Mrs. Platt, whether daughter or sister of Mr. Broome, was celebrated for her beauty. She was said to be the most beautiful woman in America; and if that was so she was certainly the most beautiful in the world.

"Both families have passed away from New Haven, and their memory is passing away. The last survivor there was a grand-daughter of Mr. Platt who died in 1860. She had lived for years in a very humble dwelling at the corner of Crown and Temple Streets, and as her old age had been sustained and cheered by the christian brotherly kindness of the church in which she was a member, she bequeathed to that church for its poor members the little remnant of her worldly goods--the last of the wealth of the great house of Broome and Platt.

"Samuel Platt Broome, no doubt, figured at the dancing party of Monday evening, November 17, 1788; and there (we may suppose) having learned that our traveler was going to Hartford the next day, he offered to go with him, and invited him to breakfast.

"Accordingly, our friend, for so we may call him, having packed his portmanteau and thrown it over his saddle, takes leave of Mr. Hillhouse's hospitable family, rides to Mr. Broome's mansion, enjoys a sumptuous breakfast, and the two fellow-



travelers, instead of taking seats (as we do) in a railway carriage, mount their horses and set out for Hartford. The road in those days (for neither the 'Hartford turnpike,' through Meriden, nor the 'Middletown turnpike' through Northford, had come into existence) was by Cedar Hill to North Haven and thence to Wallingford, where they halted for the night. The next day they breakfasted at Durham, dined at Middletown, and about sunset arrived at Hartford.

"There, if I may continue to mix up my personal recollections with my commentary on the journal, they were on ground with which I began to be familiar about twenty-four years later, and there was my wife's birthplace. We were therefore curious to know just where our friend would go in Hartford. The next words of the diary told us."

"As soon as our horses were attended to we repaired to Col. Wadsworth's, Broome with his compliments, and I with my letters."

"'Col. Wadsworth's!' We knew very well where that was, for my wife's mother, then a young lady of fifteen years, was Col. Wadsworth's youngest daughter, and to my wife herself in her childhood that house was as familiar as our own house is today.

"Col. Wadsworth's house was on the spot where the Wadsworth Athenæum now stands. It was the house in which he was born, and in which his father had lived and died—the Rev. Daniel Wadsworth who was pastor of the first church in Hartford, from 1732 to 1747. In his boyhood, he was apprenticed by his widowed mother, to Matthew Talcott, of Middletown, who was her brother, and to whom she felt that she could safely entrust the bringing up of her only son to the business of a merchant. Young Jeremiah Wadsworth learned that busi-

ness well. He became a prosperous merchant in Middletown, trading largely with the West India Islands. Living with his uncle, whose wife was a daughter of Rev. William Russell and a granddaughter of Rev. James Pierpont, he married the younger sister of Mrs. Talcott, Mehitabel, (otherwise called Mabel Russell) and Middletown continued to be his home till after the beginning of the war for Independence. In 1777, he removed his family to the old homestead, and in that house in which his children were born his children were brought up.

"By reason of his extraordinary ability as a business man, he became Commissary-General of the Continental Army, and afterwards Commissary-General, in effect, of the French auxiliary army. In the last mentioned employment he continued till the end of the war; and thus instead of being beggared, as so many Revolutionary officers were by the bankruptcy of the Continental treasury, he found himself wealthy, perhaps the wealthiest man in Connecticut, for as having been the purchaser of supplies he had accounts to settle with a government that could pay.

"The relation of Colonel Wadsworth to those armies made his house on one occasion the scene of a memorable interview. In the summer of 1780, Washington, whose headquarters were on the Hudson, proposed to the Count de Rochambeau, then at Newport in command of the recently arrived French army, an attack on New York. Letters were sent to the French Admiral in the West Indies with a request for naval assistance from that quarter.

"Meanwhile a conference between Washington and the commanders of the welcome but as yet useless French fleet and army was necessary. Just then it was that Benedict Arnold, who had been en-

trusted with the command of the fortress at West Point, attempted to consummate his crime. On Thursday, the fourteenth of September, 1780, Washington wrote from his headquarters to Arnold at West Point, 'I shall be at Peekskill on Sunday evening, on my way to Hartford to meet the French Admiral and General. You will be pleased to send down a gaurd of a captain and fifty men at that time and direct the quartermaster to have a night's forage for about forty horses. You will keep this to yourself as I wish to make my journey a secret.' Arnold was already in correspondence with Sir Henry Clinton at New York and he saw that the time had come to attempt the execution of his design. Washington began his journey on Monday, Sept. 18, and in his company were LaFayette, Knox and Hamilton. They could hardly have arrived at Hartford before Wednesday, September 20. On their arrival in Hartford, they were received with military honors, the Governor's Guards and a company of artillery being on duty. Governor Trumbull, Col. Wadsworth and other distinguished men met the great commander-in-chief and conducted him to the house of Col. Wadsworth. The French General, Count de Rochambeau and the French Admiral, the Chevalier de Ternay with their suite, arrived soon afterwards and were received with appropriate honors at their landing, and then the consultation was held at the house of Col. Wadsworth and from that

house, after a day of anxious conference, Washington set out on his return to the Highlands, where during his brief absence, Arnold's great treason had been exposed and baffled.

"This was only eight years and two months before the evening in which Samuel Broome and our friend, who is as yet nameless, called at the same door, the one with his compliments, the other with his letters of introduction.

"'We,' says our friend, 'were rather in our dishabilles, but 'twas no matter, we were travelers, and they were none of them in the habit of regarding a powdered head and a pretty coat as the standard of excellency—their tastes are formed upon better principles. After delivering our compliments and letters, we were about leaving them, but were prevented by their importunities to stay and spend the evening. We needed but little coaxing, we laid aside our hats and our whips and resolved to stay as long as they wanted us. The beautiful Miss H—ns, (Hopkins) the handsome Miss S—r, (Seymour), and the pretty Miss B—ll, (Bull), were of our party. Music, dancing and sociality constituted our amusements. Miss B—ll sang 'The Hermit' sweetly. I wished to accompany her with a flute, but I dared not tell them so. The bell rung much earlier than I wished and I left them when I would willingly have staid longer.'"

(*To be Continued.*)

## INDIAN PIPE.

ELIZABETH ALDEN CURTIS.

Strange, waxen flower, thy down-bended  
blooms,—

Half hid 'neath fragrant droppings from  
you pine

Up-reared so gaunt and barren,—in de-  
cline

Of vulgar notice haunt the forest glooms ;  
And here, close clustered, guard their  
faint perfumes,

Through the long summer, where the slant  
suns shine.

It was not skill, but happy chance, made  
mine

To catch the glisten of thy crisp-curved  
plumes !

What place, mysterious flower, dost thou  
hold

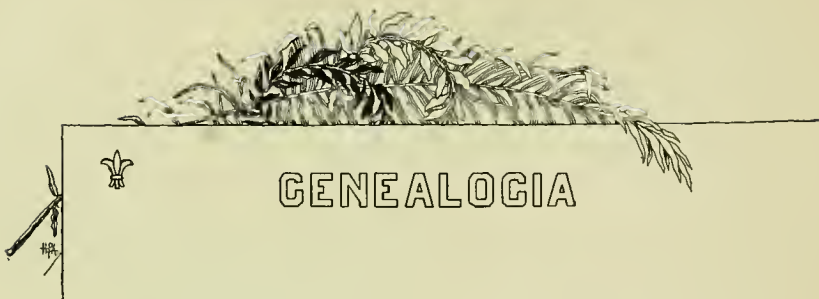
In this strange-fashioned earth's economy ?

For-time, men plucked thee as a remedy

'Gainst lesser hurts of body manifold,—

Truly of mind as well, be-seemeth me.

Being over beautiful and nothing bold !



## GENEALOGIA

### GENEALOGICAL DEPARTMENT.

Querists are requested to write all names of persons and places so that they cannot be misunderstood, to write on only one side of the paper, to enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope, and ten cents in stamps for each query. Those who are subscribers will be given preference in the insertion of their queries and they will be inserted in the order in which they are received. All matters relating to this department must be sent to THE CONNECTICUT MAGAZINE, Hartford, marked Genealogical Department. Give full name and post office address.

It is optional with querist to have name and address or initials published.

#### ANSWERS.

67. (a).—The widow of Isaac Royce was Elizabeth, dau. of Samuel and Elizabeth (Scudder) Lothrop. (Old Houses of Norwich, page 505), but she was not the Elizabeth "Roys" who m. Ebenezer Clark, Dec. 22, 1696. She m. 2nd Joseph Thompson and died before June 11, 1690. (New Haven County Court Records, Vol. I, p. 178.) The wife of Ebenezer Clark was Elizabeth, widow of Joseph Royce, son of Samuel. (New Haven County Court Records, Vol. I, pp. 234 and 256). She was the dau. of John and Hannah (Bassett) Parker. (Davis' History, Wallingford.) Ebenezer Clark died April 30, 1721 and his widow Elizabeth m. 3 Nathaniel Andrews, Oct. 6, 1721, (Wallingford Town Records and Vol. V New Haven Probate Records.) (s) James Steele m. "Bethyah" Bishop, Oct. 18, 1651. (Guilford Town Records, Dr. Alvin Talcott's ms. genealogy of Guilford Families and Savage's General Dictionary under "Bishop.") She was the dau. of John and Anne Bishop of Guilford as shown by Talcott and Savage above cited and by the will of

Anne Bishop, widow of John as recorded in the Hartford Probate Records. She was one of the original members of the Second Church at Hartford and her name appears on Mrs. Smith's memorial to the original sisters of that church. Frank Barnard King of Albany, N. Y., is now preparing a revised edition of the Steele family.

JAMES SHEPARD,  
New Britain, Conn.

97.—Mary, wife of Lieut. Miles Melwin was dau. of Hezekiah Talcott, and Jemima, his wife. Mary was born in Durham, Feb. 16, 1723; d. Jan. 18, 1793. Hezekiah Talcott moved from Hartford to Durham. He died in Durham, Feb. 13, 1764, in his 70th year. Jemima d. Feb. 2, 1757 in her 66th year.

A. M. CAMP.

83.—Mrs. Henry Walters of New Britain or Waterbury, Conn., has data concerning the Gladding family.

86. (b).—Eber Merriman married (2) Hannah Rogers. Eber was son of Rev. John and Jemima (Wilcox) Merriman. Rev. John was son of John and Elizabeth (Peck). John was son of Nathaniel and Hannah (Lines).

# EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF DR. MASON FITCH COGSWELL.

COMPILED FROM ANNOTATIONS OF REV. DR. LEONARD BACON.

BY ELLEN STRONG BARTLETT.

## PART II.

*Continued from October Number.*

“THE bell referred to was the nine o'clock bell, the old New England curfew, after which it was hardly good manners to prolong an evening call.

“Under date of ‘Thursday, 20th,’ the diarist records that, after breakfasting at his lodgings, he ‘sat half an hour under the hands of the friseur before going out to deliver his letters.’ He seems to have been a stranger in Hartford and desirous of making a favorable impression. So we see him with his head nicely powdered and his queue newly tied in a black ribbon, walking along Main Street, for in those days few Hartford people of mark and fashion lived on any other street. He ‘called on Mr. Strong and was much disappointed in not seeing Mrs. Strong.’ ‘My feelings,’ he adds, ‘were prepared to meet an old friend, and to have them so suddenly checked by the information that she was so indisposed as to render her recovery doubtful was painful.’ In November, 1788, Nathan Strong, (afterward Dr. Strong) had been for nearly fifteen years pastor of the First Church in Hartford, and was already one of the first men in Connecticut—the peer of Dr. Dwight, as he had been his college classmate. His ministry of forty-one years

was terminated by his death, Dec. 25, 1818. I well remember the sensation which his death produced and how that sensation was renewed and deepened by the death of President Dwight a few days later. Mrs. Strong was Anna McCurdy of Lyme. She had been married less than two years, and her life (as the diary intimates) was then coming to its close.

“Mr. Strong’s house was the next door to Col. Wadsworth’s, and there it seems our traveler had been invited to dine. I will venture to transcribe the record. ‘We were soon seated at the table; our company consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Wadsworth, Miss St. John, Misses Harriet and Caty, Messrs. D. Wadsworth, Samuel Broome, and myself. We were all cheerful; how could we be otherwise when the heads of the table were peculiarly so—her countenance as placid as a summer eve, and his full of benignity, equally expressive of the goodness of his heart and the greatness of his soul. After dinner, the ladies retired to dress for a visit to Miss Bull, except Miss St. John, who was indisposed with a toothache. W——, B——, and myself, amused ourselves in the parlor with music until tea-time, when we followed the ladies. I was pleased with Miss Bull yesterday, but more so to-day. I trow she



is a good girl. Immediately after tea we returned to Colonel Wadsworth's and spent the evening in a manner that was to me delightfully instructive. A circle of only five, we did not wish it enlarged. Not a single individual interrupted our converse until ten o'clock. Our subjects of conversation were various; we ran counter to all the rules of modern politeness; we did not, to my recollection, say a word about fashions or plays and such like matters, nor did we scandalize a single character through the whole course of the evening, but we acted in direct agreement with our feelings.'

"After describing, in a somewhat effusive way, the course and character of their talk, the writer portrays the interlocutors in the dialogue. 'Harriet has read a good deal and has reflected a good deal on what she has read. Hence she has many observations of her own, not eccentric, but pleasingly original. She has one of the happiest tempers in the world, and delights in making those happy who are around her. She speaks highly of many and ill of none. Add to these a happy talent of adapting her conversation to the company she is in, and it is not strange that she should be thought an agreeable girl. Although she is not a beauty, yet her countenance is beautifully expressive.'

"We will pause a moment before this pen-portrait.

"Among the Trumbull pictures in the Yale School of the Fine Arts, there are five miniatures of ladies in one frame, No. 22. The date is 1791, three years later than the date of this journal. The first of the five is Harriet Wadsworth, and the painter has made 'her countenance,' I will not say an ideal beauty, but beautiful as well as 'beautifully expressive.' Perhaps affection added something of poetry to the likeness, for the family tradition is that the painter was her lover.

"A monument in the parish church-yard of St. George, on the Island of Bermuda, bears this inscription:

To The  
MEMORY  
of  
HARRIET WADSWORTH  
of Hartford, Conn., U. S. A.  
Who died in this Island,  
Of a Consumption,  
April 10, 1793,  
Aged 24  
Years.

"In that lively and happy company at Col. Wadsworth's, Thursday evening, November 20, 1788, there was no thought of such a record to be made so soon.

"We return to our admiring friend's pen-portraits of the company. 'Cathy is her younger sister, with a face as indicative of a good heart as a lamb's is of its meekness. She seems to possess all the virtues of her sister, but they are of a younger growth.

'She wants a little of that grace which enables Harriet to do everything to advantage; and a few more years will probably add to the list of her agreeables.'

"Here we pause again:—Catherine Wadsworth was at that time not quite fifteen years old. Her miniature is one of the five which I have mentioned, being directly under her sisters; and it shows that when she was in her eighteenth year, her face, still indicative of a good heart was in the full bloom of beauty; and on the wall of an apartment in my house is a portrait (copied from the original by Sully) which shows what she was when 'a few more years,' without effacing the glow of maiden beauty, had blended with it the charm of matronly dignity and grace.

"I proceed with our friend's record of his impressions:—'As for Daniel, he is a





FROM OIL MINIATURES, PAINTED BY JOHN TRUMBULL, NOW IN THE TRUMBULL  
GALLERY, YALE ART SCHOOL, NEW HAVEN, CONN.

HARRIET WADSWORTH.

Daughter of  
Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth.

FAITH TRUMBULL.

Daughter of Jonathan Trumbull and  
wife of Daniel Wadsworth.

MRS. JONATHAN TRUMBULL.

CATHERINE WADSWORTH.

Daughter of Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth  
and wife of General Nathaniel Terry.

MARY JULIA SEYMOUR.

Daughter of Thomas Seymour, the first  
Mayor of Hartford.

strange youth. *With his pockets full of money*, he had rather, at any time, sit down at home betwixt his two sisters and by some new act of tenderness call forth their affection toward him, than to be in the *best* and most *fashionable* company (best and fashionable underscored as 'wrote sarkastic') at the gaming table, or in any place where he can spend his money in an *honorable* and *polite* way. (Honorable and polite again 'wrote sarkastic'). 'Tis true as it is strange; and furthermore he is warmly attached to the principles of virtue and morality, and really he is not ashamed of his God.'

"This 'strange youth' was so eccentric through a long life, and his family affections though he was childless, were so strong that in his old age he took the lead in building upon the site of what had been his father's and grandfather's home, the Wadsworth Atheneum, devoted to public uses, one part of it to the Connecticut Historical Society, another part to the Hartford Young Men's Institute, and another part to a Gallery of Paintings. It is his filial tribute to the memory of his ancestors, who were identified with Hartford from its beginning and designed as their monument. It is his also. I think I may say of the many who have inherited or are to inherit the remainder of his wealth there is not one who regrets that princely gift to Hartford or is not proud of it. Nor can I refuse to say of that 'strange youth' who loved his home so well, that the tender affection for his sisters which is portrayed in what I have just been telling, lived in him to the last. Though he survived for more than fifty years that elder sister whose decay and death he watched in lone Bermuda, he never seemed to lose the freshness of his grief.

"Having interpolated so much about the Wadsworth family, I will add before returning to our friend's description of

that evening's pleasure, that Colonel Wadsworth, having served as Representative in Congress for three successive terms, from the organization of the government in 1789, died in 1804 of premature decay the result of hardships and exposures in the war for independence. Madame Wadsworth lived to extreme old age and died in 1817. I saw her buried by the side of her husband, her grave being the last save one (or possibly two), that was made in the old burial-ground behind the Center Church. As I stood there among the spectators that had been drawn together by the unwonted sight of a burial in that old place, I little thought that children of mine would trace their descent through her from James Pierpont and Thomas Hooker.

"Returning now from this digression, and resuming our friend's description of the pleasant company that evening at Col. Wadsworth's, we are reminded that New Haven had a representative there in the person of 'Sam'l Broome.' Him the writer describes as 'a lad of good sense but rather trifling at times,' and then says, 'he possesses a talent at punning, and by occasionally throwing in a remark he prevented us from becoming too seriously sentimental.' So we may congratulate ourselves that New Haven did really, though indirectly, contribute something towards completing and rounding out the enjoyment of the occasion. Even a trifer and a punster may sometimes be of use when the conversation is growing thoughtful and is in danger of becoming too serious or too 'sentimental.'

"At a reasonable hour our friend repaired to his lodgings, but he did not resign himself to sleep till he had read from "Elegant Extracts," (a volume which I remember, though it is obsolete now) several pathetic and descriptive pieces which the ladies had commended to his

notice, and on which his critical judgment coincided with theirs.

"The next morning, 'Friday, 21st,' we find him immediately after breakfast mounting his 'Rosinante' and 'setting his face westward' with letters and whatever else he had 'for the name of Talcott.' He went out to the Talcott 'family mansion on the hill,' beyond where the American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb now is. Approaching the house he was met by a 'venerable old gentleman,' to whom he introduced himself as bringing 'letters from New York,' which, by the way, is the first intimation we have had of where he came from. The 'family mansion' was at that time held by a son of Gov. Talcott, Chief Magistrate of His Majesty's Colony of Connecticut from 1724 to his death in 1741, a period of seventeen years. A sister of his was the mother of Col. Wadsworth. Austin Talcott, Attorney General of the state of New York, one of the most brilliant names in the legal profession of that great state was his grandson. In the conversation which ensues after our traveler has entered the house and in which there is a hardly perceptible flavor of the medical profession, it comes out that his name is Cogswell and at last we know beyond a peradventure who he is.

"Mason Fitch Cogswell was a graduate of Yale College in the class of 1780, and was honored as the foremost in that class. The war for independence was then in progress, and he immediately began the study and I may say the practice of medicine and surgery under an elder brother, who was a surgeon in the army. He was stationed for a time in Stamford, where his brother had married into the Davenport family, and where he was at home in families of the highest position and culture. After the war, he resided, I know not how long, in New York; and he seems

now to be making a journey from New York to keep Thanksgiving at his father's house.

"His father was the Rev. James Cogswell, who had been from 1744 to 1771 the pastor of the church in Canterbury, but for the last six years had been pastor in Scotland, a parish of Windham. His mother was Alice Fitch, of the great Fitch family in eastern Connecticut, and her mother was a descendant from the famous hero of the Pequot War, John Mason. Thus it came to pass that his name was Mason Fitch Cogswell. At the date of this journal he was apparently making his first acquaintance with Hartford and in that day's ride to the Talcott mansion, he had passed—unconscious of the future—the site now occupied by a great institution which had its origin from the calamity of the daughter to whom he gave his mother's name, Alice Cogswell.

"Having accompanied him thus leisurely from Stamford to Hartford, we must hasten through the remainder of his journey. The next day, 'Saturday, 22nd,' he was ferried across the Connecticut at an early hour and arrived at his father's house in the evening.

"'The tear of pleasure glittered' in that father's eye as he embraced his son. For 'Sunday 21st,' the record opens, 'Attended divine service and was delighted both with the preaching and the music. My feelings before I entered the house, were attuned to harmony and the music which was uncommonly good, striking upon the already vibrating cords, prepared me in the best possible manner for the ensuing discourse from 'My son, keep thyself pure.' The filial hearer (evidently) confounded with the text the application of it which he made to himself and which he knew was in his father's thoughts. The text was from I. Tim. vi., 22: 'Keep thyself pure,' said the apostle to the

young preacher, but he did not in that connection say 'My son.'

\* "Monday was a stormy day; and our traveler was all day at home. Tuesday he visited some old friends. Wednesday was stormy again and cold; and he spent most of the day with his father who was indisposed. But 'in the evening as a prelude to Thanksgiving'—so the journal tells us,—'I went up and drank a mug of flip with Esq. Devotion and ate pompion pie with his wife, 'Then as he writes, he adds the explanation, 'How cold it grows! I am too dull to write in my journal—Perhaps the flip has run round my intellects, or, what is worse, the pompion pie.'

"I will abbreviate, as much as I can, his partly humorous record of Thanksgiving day, 'Thursday 27th.' The duties of the day had been to him such as he had never encountered before. His father, being too ill to officiate in the Thanksgiving service, devolved on him the duty of reading to the congregation an appropriate discourse or as he called it, 'preaching.' His desire to please a 'beloved parent' overcame his diffidence; and at the appointed hour, with the psalm book in his pocket and his printed or written sermon in his hand, he presented himself at church and told the elders what their pastor has commissioned him to do. His offer was thankfully acknowledged and he seated himself in the minister's pew. But 'a venerable sage' got up and led him into the deacon's seat. He was invited to go up higher, but the thought, 'Humble thyself and thou shall be exalted' kept him out of the too lofty pulpit.

"He perceived that nothing would be done without him and being 'requested to proceed' he 'pulled out his psalm book,' and his hand trembled but very little. 'Let us sing' said he, 'the 97th Psalm,' and he read it with a very audible voice. The music was fine; it entirely dissipated

his timidities and as soon as it ceased, he arose and if he had had one on, he would probably have stroked his band; but as he had none, he wiped his face with his pocket handkerchief, named his text and went on. Some people would have called it reading; but really, he acted the preacher to admiration, as he was afterwards told by numbers of the congregation. The exercises were closed with an anthem from Isaiah, 'Sing, O ye heavens, etc.,' which was most enchantingly sung. 'After church, he repaired to his friend Devotion's and was treated with quite as much respect and attention as he desired. He drank flip, ate turkeys, pigs, pompion pies, apple pies, tarts, etc., etc., until he was perfectly satisfied. After supper he went home, gave thanks with his father, smoked a pipe for company's sake, bade the old folks good night, went into the kitchen, sung a number of songs to Polly and Betsey (his sisters), ate apples and nuts with them, and went to bed well satisfied with the transactions of the day.'

"It occurs to me that among the hearers in the Scotland meeting-house that day, there must have been a certain bashful and studious boy, ten years old, with a marvelous appetite for knowledge and with a keen and quiet observation of men and things who had already—two years earlier, picked up Latin enough to understand the Triennial Catalogue of Yale, and whose parents had been advised by Parson Cogswell (though they needed no persuasion) to give him a liberal education. That boy was James L. Kingsley; and it startles me to remember that in 1852 the venerable Professor Kingsley passed away from this living and dying world.

"On 'Friday 28th,' our friend rides to Windham—dines at Maj. Backus's, where he finds 'pompion pies again in abundance'—then sets out for Lebanon in search of a friend whom he has already



mentioned more than once under the apparently fictitious name of 'Orlands,' but whom I cannot identify. He finds him—just where he wished to find him—at Mr. Porter's. There he had a delightful evening with Emily and Sophy, the daughters of Mr. Porter, and charming sister of 'Orlands,' named Eliza. That Mr. Porter had been Gov. Trumbull's confidential secretary through all the war and therefore we are not surprised to find our friend saying, 'Miss Trumbull made us happy an hour or so with her company. Her person is elegant, though small; here countenance agreeably expressive and what is generally called handsome. Her first appearance is much in her favor. I will wait till I see her again before I say anything more about her.'

"Miss Trumbull was grand-daughter of the old war governor who had died three years before, and daughter of the second Jonathan who became governor ten years later.

"The next day, 'Saturday 29th,' was one of those wet autumn days that introduce winter. But our friend says, 'We walked, or rather, waded over to Col. Trumbull's and sat and chatted an hour with him; Mrs. Trumbull and Faithy all agreeable, the former peculiarly so—and the appearance of the latter, tho' reserved, such as inspires you with a desire of becoming intimately acquainted.' The miniatures of these two ladies are in the same group of five with the two daughters of Col. Wadsworth, Mrs. Trumbull in the center, Miss Faith Trumbull, (afterwards Mrs. Daniel Wadsworth) in the right hand upper corner.

"There is a great deal of history connected with old Lebanon—so much that I dare not begin to touch upon it. Our traveler was hindered by the rain from proceeding to Norwich that day, as he had intended, but at an early hour the

next morning, (Sunday, Nov. 30th,) he made the short ride. 'About half-past eight,' he says, 'I arrived at Governor Huntington's, my former home, and the manner in which I was welcomed made it as much so as ever. Had I been an own brother, Mrs. Huntington could not have treated me with more tenderness and affection, and I never before saw the Governor so social and conversable.'

"Here are allusions which become intelligible when we learn that Rev. James Cogswell's wife, Alice Fitch, died in 1772, soon after his settlement in Scotland—that in 1773 he married the widow of his predecessor, Mr. Devotion, when Mason Fitch Cogswell was twelve years old and that the boy was afterwards placed in the family of Mr. Huntington, at Norwich, where he was fitted for college. Samuel Huntington, whose name is subscribed to the Declaration of Independence, was born in that parish of Scotland. Like another subscriber to that Declaration, Roger Sherman, he made himself a great lawyer. In his youth he won the heart and hand of the Parson's comely daughter, Martha Devotion. So when Mrs. Huntington's mother had become the wife of Mason F. Cogswell's father, they were in some figurative and step-sense an elder sister and a younger brother.

"Our traveler's ten miles ride that Sunday morning was not regarded as an excuse for absence from public worship. He 'attended divine service both A. M. and P. M., and heard two metaphysical discourses from Mr. King, and on the whole was well pleased with them—thought, however, he was a little out of his latitude.'

"(Rev. Walter King was pastor of the Second Church in Norwich (at the Landing) from 1787 to 1811. He was contemporary in college with Dr. Mason F. Cogswell, though in a later class, 1782.)



"In the evening, the Sabbath having ended at sunset, our friend made a call at Mr. Woodbridge's, where Clara and Hannah were as glad to see him as he was to see them, and 'paid more attention to' him 'than to all the other gentlemen in the room.' But, in recording the fact, he checks the temptation to vanity by the consideration, 'they see me once in three years, and them they see every day.' Returning to his lodgings at the decorous hour of nine, he had time to 'converse an hour with the Governor and his lady' before retiring to rest. He remained in Norwich four days longer, visiting old friends with great enjoyment. On Monday he records that though it was a dull and disagreeable day, 'twas sunshine in the house.'

"'Refused several invitations to dine out, that I might eat turkey with the Governor. Thanksgiving not gone yet, for we had flip and pompion pies both. Drank several glasses of port, and was much pleased with several \*musical anecdotes from the Governor.'

"After visiting several old friends with much pleasure and drinking tea with 'Clara and Hannah,' he returned 'about eight and the last of the evening was equal to the first, Sammy and Fanny,' so runs the record, 'have improved exceedingly since I last saw them, both in mind and manners.' He was not aware that Sammy, of whom, a college graduate of three years

standing, he made mention so familiarly, was to be, not many years later, Chief Justice and then Governor of Ohio—a state which in that year, 1788, had no existence even as a territory under territorial government, in which the earliest permanent settlement had just been made by a pioneer emigration from New England and which in 1802 was received into the Union, the first-born of the Ordinance of 1787.

"The convention about which our friend had a chat with the Governor was doubtless that which in the January preceding had given the ratification of Connecticut to the Constitution of the United States. Of that convention, Gov. Huntington was a conspicuous member; and this reminds us that when the genial diarist sat there chatting and smoking the calumet with the Governor, the government of the United States had not come into being. Eleven of the thirteen states had adopted the Constitution; electors of President were to be chosen in those eleven states on the first Wednesday in January; the electors were to meet in their several colleges on the first Wednesday in February; and on the 4th of March the First Congress was to meet in New York. In fact, for want of a quorum in the two houses, the organization of the national government was not completed until April 30, 1789."

*To be Concluded in next number.*

\* Note. The word "Musical" here was evidently used to mean amusing.



# EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF DR. MASON FITCH COGSWELL.

COMPILED FROM ANNOTATIONS OF REV. DR. LEONARD BACON.

BY ELLEN STRONG BARTLETT.

## PART III.

RETURNING to the diary from which we have wandered, we find that on Tuesday our friend 'breakfasted with Gen. Huntington; dined at Dr. Lathrop's; drank tea at Mr. Andrew Huntington's; and supped with William Leffingwell,' return to lodge "at the Governor's." Without pausing on the other names here mentioned, some of them notable in history, we find our attention arrested by a New Haven name, William Leffingwell. Looking forward we read in the next day's record "Dined at William Leffingwell's. Mr. L. was my classmate at New Haven. We chatted about old matters with much pleasure. Joa. sister to William, is a smart girl, or I am much out of my conjectures. She has a pleasing countenance, an expressive eye, and possesses good manners. Sam'l Huntington and Dan Lathrop were likewise of our party. A full grown turkey, and more pompion pie, etc., everything in nice order."

Old people remember the time when Mr. Leffingwell, residing in the old fashioned but stately mansion on Chapel street at the corner of Temple, with a terraced garden which extended half way up to College street, was regarded as the richest citizen of New Haven. The last survivor of his immediate family was Dr.

Edward H. Leffingwell. One of his daughters, Caroline Mary, was the wife of Augustus Russell Street; and the memory of her public spirit, as well as his, is perpetuated in the edifice and the endowments of the School of the Fine Arts, in Yale University.

A grand-daughter of William Leffingwell, Caroline Augusta Street, was the wife of Admiral Foote; and thus the old mansion, built by Jared Ingersoll before the Revolution, and in later times, the residence of Admiral Foote, came to be known by the name of the gallant admiral.

Those who knew Mrs. Leffingwell long afterward when she had become a grandmother, and especially those who were acquainted with her housekeeping, cannot but understand that the supper of Tuesday night, and the dinner of Wednesday were not only well got up, "everything in nice order," but were enlivened by and brightened by her sprightly talk. We may be sure that she, the daughter of the famed New Haven bookseller, Isaac Beers, and from her early girlhood conspicuous among the ladies of the college town, which did not become a city even in name until 1784, had much to say in the pleasant conversation between her husband and her guest, about their college friends and

college days. It could not but be a pleasant party, six at table, all young, four gentlemen as well as the hostess overflowing with memories of Yale and New Haven, and that "smart girl," Joanna Leffingwell, whose "pleasing countenance" retained something of its beauty, and whose "expressive eye" had not lost its expressiveness, when I knew her, almost half a century later, an honored "mother in Israel" the widow of Charles (not Daniel) Lathrop.

The next day (Thursday) was like the other days at Norwich; breakfast with his "old friend and good friend Shubael;" "dinner with the Governor and family" at Mr. Breed's, where Shubael and his wife were also present, and where the inevitable "pompion pie" suggested the thought of how soon he should be beyond the reach of that New England daintiness; an after-dinner call at Mr. Coit's; tea at Mr. Moore's; and the evening at Mr. Leffingwell's again "in a circle of no less than sixteen ladies, besides many other supernumeraries." To the record of all this, he adds, "About nine, went to my lodgings, proposed a plan to the Governor, and received his approbation, ate supper, smoked the calumet for the last time, and bade them all a good night."

On Friday, Dec. 5th, our traveler, having taken leave of Norwich friends, journeyed toward his father's home, by the somewhat meandering way of all his "uncles and aunts in Lisbon, Preston, and Canterbury;" and those uncles and aunts, with all the cousins, seem to have been the most loving and amiable people in the world. Arriving at Scotland parsonage again on Saturday, he was detained there by a storm which gave him time for reading and writing, and for "receiving lessons of divine instruction from the lips of "his" affectionate parent." Wednesday, Dec. 19th, the weather having become propi-

tious, he went to Mansfield for the sake of visiting two more cousins, whose amiable qualities he sums up by saying, "In short, they are two Fitches, which is sufficiently explanatory to myself."

From Mansfield, the next day's travel brought him to Lebanon again, his solitary ride being cheered by the pleasant thought that all the relatives whom he has been visiting, and who had received him with kindest affection, were so well worth knowing. These uncles, aunts, and cousins seem to have been fair specimens of what I may venture to call the old Connecticut gentry, well-to-do people living comfortably and honestly on their own acres, working six days and resting on the seventh according to the commandment, thinking people, whose intellectual life was nourished chiefly by the Bible and the doctrinal exposition of it from the pulpit, men and women whose hereditary Puritanism had not vanished into Estheticism, and who were therefore characterized more by strength of opinions about right and wrong than by exquisiteness of taste, plain people with no aristocratic pretensions, yet gentry as descended from ancestors whom they honored, and for whose sake they were ready to welcome every cousin who did not dishonor the stock (the gens) from which they came. All the kindred whom our traveling friend had visited in Preston, Lisbon, Canterbury, and Mansfield, were as he proudly calls them, "Fitches," and they all knew their descent from James Fitch, the famous first minister of Norwich.

At Mrs. Tisdale's, in Lebanon, he had another "charming evening with the ladies," and yet he took time for a call at "Col. Trumbull's," where he renewed his acquaintance with Daniel and Harriet Wadsworth who had just arrived from Hartford. The next morning (Friday, Dec. 12th) he walked over to Col. Trumbull's where he

had promised "to call for letters." The post-office system of the United States was then in its infancy, and an opportunity of sending letters from Lebanon to Hartford by a friendly traveler was precious. After an hour of talk with "the ladies and with Daniel" and "some time with the colonel," and much delight in the "paintings of his brother" whom we call Col. Trumbull, he set his face toward Hartford at about eleven o'clock, "in company," he says, "with a Mr. Pitkin from Farmington, with whom I was so much pleased in the daytime, that I went and tarried with him at his uncle's in East Hartford, Federal to a button, very civil and very hospitable. Crossed the ferry in the morning, and dined at Mr. Perkins' with Mr. Pitkin. After dinner, called and delivered letters from Harriet and Daniel, and engaged to return and drink tea with smiling Cate, and so I did and was made very welcome and very happy."

The next day being Sunday, our traveler "attended divine service at the North Meeting" and was much impressed with the sermons, especially with the afternoon discourse from a text which he remembered as that from which the sermon was preached at his own mother's funeral, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it." Mr. Strong was then passing through one of the sorrows of his domestic life. Already he had been once a widower, and his second wife Anna McCurdy, was then wasting with the disease of which she died three months later, at the age of twenty-nine. Naturally the sermon from such a text and in such circumstances, "flowed from the heart and reached the heart, especially of Mason F. Cogswell, to whom Anna McCurdy had been "an old friend." As evening came on, he recollected his "engagement to Mrs. Wadsworth and Caty," and had a pleasant hour with them.

On Monday, he was occupied through the morning with "how-do-you-do visits and some matters of business," but after dinner, we find him paying his respects to Dr. Hopkins, and "chatting physic with him an hour or so," then "galloping out to the hill" and rejoicing to find the invalids there (of the Talcott family) all better than when he saw them last. He "gallops back again and drinks tea with Mr. and Mrs. Wolcott,—a charming couple" whose happiness moves him to write, "I wish I was as well married, and anybody and everybody could say as much of me." The Dr. Hopkins with whom he talked on professional subjects, was in his day the foremost man of the medical profession not only in Hartford but, if I mistake not, in Connecticut, one of "the Hartford wits," if not the most famous of them.

We may assume, at least we may be permitted to conjecture that Dr. Cogswell, a young man not yet settled in life, had in his thoughts, while talking with Dr. Hopkins, the "plan" on which he had taken the advice of Gov. Huntington before leaving Norwich; and that his "plan" was to establish himself in his profession there in Hartford. The Mr. Wolcott whose domestic felicity he so admired, was Oliver Wolcott, afterwards secretary of the treasury under John Adams, and in his later years, governor of Connecticut.

Just here the manuscript begins to be again imperfect. Some enterprising mouse seems to have meddled with it, and what remains of the last few pages is interspersed with many a *hiatus valde deflendus*. I can make out that after tea with Mr. and Mrs. Wolcott the diarist "spent a social hour with—and Julia Seymour, certainly a pretty girl, and — a good one too" — that he "called and took leave of — at Col. Wadsworth's, that he was lodged that night at Mr. Strong's where he "attended particularly to Mrs.



Strong's case and had a long and friendly conversation with her husband, pondering meanwhile (we may conjecture) the question of making his abode in Hartford, I find him proceeding on the next day to Haddam, and there "welcomed very sincerely by Theodore and Parson May and family"—thence, after a day's detention by storm, he comes to New Haven again, and finds the same hospitality which he had found four weeks before.

The last date on these torn leaves is Saturday, Dec. 19th. On that day, after "several morning visits"—additional to all the visits of the preceding day, he rode to Greenfield via Stratford, Victory, etc. It was seven o'clock in the evening, when he arrived at the house of the pastor, who was also the poet of "Greenfield Hill." He found himself "in the midst of a smiling circle;" and the talk by the winter evening fireside was cheerful and instructive. I can make out concerning the "four young ladies under Mr. Dwight's tuition" that "the expression of each was uncommonly fine—a loveliness of disposition, a benevolence of heart, and a sprightliness of thought were clearly discernible in every eye." Here we come to a ragged edge. The ——— The last words are "If I can judge—account given of them by—Mrs. Dwight, and my own ——— they are lovely girls, and on the high road to make ——— husbands happy."

This picture of life in the last century, a snap shot, so to speak, taken when people did not know that any one was looking, discloses new charms at every reading.

After we have excepted the powdered hair, and the unaffected interest in Sunday worship, which, alas! is not at all characteristic of these days, it is hard to realize that these young people are not of us to-day. The cultivated manners, the

ease of intercourse, the unaffected enjoyment of the pleasures of life, disclose a time of leisure and courteous living.

While many are ransacking every musty book of town enactments, and church records, to prove that our ancestors led a treadmill existence under the clouds of bigotry and severity, harassed by a superstitious dread of a Deity robed in terrors, and by the present fear of harsh and strait-laced magistrates, we may read this cheerful account of dancing, music, and singing, balls and teas, all enjoyed by the minister's son without any reproach, and in the midst of families whose social position was beyond question. Probably more genuine pleasure was enjoyed by young people in those days than now, for the leading families were still grouped near enough each other for the exercise of free hospitality among all the members of the "clans," and an intimate knowledge of each other and an affectionate interest were retained, which, with a certain quality in the conditions of life, made social intercourse satisfying without all the feverish effort to secure novel pleasures which is seen now.

And what shall be said of the extraordinary prevalence of "pompon pie" at that period? Evidently, cut-worms and other enemies of the delicious vegetable had not then gained an ascendancy. And we must lament the vanishing of the dignified name "pompon" behind the uncouth "pumpkin."

Dr. Bacon's running commentary adds much to the value and lucidity of the text. It may be well to explain that Dr. Bacon married Miss Catherine Terry, the daughter of the Catherine Wadsworth, afterwards Mrs. Terry, who appears in the diary as the good-hearted younger sister, a circumstance which makes all the more remarkable the return to Dr. Bacon of the manuscript.



Interesting as is this glimpse of "early days in Connecticut" for its inherent value, the diary gains in meaning when it is read in the light of the subsequent career of its writer. This genial and gifted young man, the always welcome guest, had not been idle in the years before this visiting time.

Born in 1761, he was a Yale graduate in 1780, and although the youngest in a class which included such men as Matthew and Roger Griswold and other able men, he was the valedictorian.

As has been said, he had an elder brother, James, who had been a surgeon in the Revolutionary army, and had afterwards practiced in New York. Mason Cogswell was with him in that place, and studied surgery and medicine. For several years he was in Stamford, where he made important and lasting friends. His musical gifts were of notable use in Stamford; for it is related that he not only instructed the church choir of that place in the common psalm-tunes, but also in an anthem or other piece of set music for every Sabbath in the year. It is easy to imagine that the attractions of the young choir-master made the exercises of "singing-school" especially delightful to the Stamford *beaux* and *belles*.

As may be seen, a thought for the serious business of life constantly lurked beneath the pleasures of the trip; and as a result of the discussions mentioned in the diary, Dr. Cogswell came to Hartford as a practicing physician in 1789.

At all events, Dr. Cogswell became one of the foremost surgeons of his day, and was revered and loved by all who came under his influence. His skill, his devoted attention to his patients, his sympathy with the sick, his compassion for all forms of suffering, earned for him again and again the name of the "beloved physician."

When the Retreat for the Insane was established in Hartford, Dr. Cogswell was one of the leading supporters of the scheme.

His professional reputation was not without foundation. In 1803, he performed the operation of tying the carotid artery, which, although now common, had never been attempted in this country. A year before, it had been done in London by Mr. Abernethy, and at about the same time, once on the Continent; but Dr. Cogswell could not have known it, and he thus deserved all the credit of a pioneer. He also introduced to America the removal of cataract from the eye.

As was the custom of the time, he often received students of medicine, and he was deemed so efficient an instructor that he was asked to take the chair of surgery in the Yale Medical School. For various reasons that offer was at last declined.

His wife had sad memories of the Revolution; for she was the daughter of that Colonel William Ledyard who was slain with his own sword in the act of surrender at Groton. The blood-stained waist-coat may still be seen in the historical collection at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford which was founded by the very Daniel Wadsworth who appears as a youth in the foregoing diary. But Mary Ledyard brought grace and courtesy to the Cogswell house on Prospect street, and the mansion became a center of culture and refined life. Dr. Cogswell's library was one of the best in the state; he was still an ardent lover of music; and his poetry was of no small repute in his time. He was noble in mien and careful in his dress, always wearing the silk stockings and knee-breeches of the old time, saying that it was the only proper dress for a gentleman.

But, amid all the pleasure of this home, enriched by happiness within and honor

without, there appeared the "spot of evil," a touch of the blight that falls, sooner or later, on all human bliss.

The third and youngest daughter, born in 1805, the bright and pretty Alice, when a little more than two years old, became ill with "spotted fever," now called cerebro-spiral-meningitis. She was brought back to health, but soon she failed to notice the song of the birds or the voices of her friends. She was deaf.

Months passed on, and the usual result followed—the prattle of baby talk ceased, and only inarticulate, gurgling sounds came from her lips. The sweet child was a deaf mute.

Of course everything that fondness and intelligence could suggest to soften the calamity, and to mitigate its consequences, was done; but there was little to do, for the idea of teaching deaf-mutes was almost unknown in this country. With unspeakable pain, Dr. Cogswell saw the little girl lapsing into ignorance, with no prospect of developing the natural gifts which were evidently hers.

But he read of the wonderful success in teaching mutes in France and England, and there was a gleam of hope in the resolve which arose within him to secure such benefits for his child.

Thus it was that the name of Alice Cogswell became indissolubly connected with the establishment of a famous philanthropic enterprise. The question arose, should Alice be sent to Europe for instruction, or could that instruction be brought to her?

Of course, the latter was desirable, so Dr. Cogswell applied himself, with the tact and good-humor, and energy which have appeared in the diary, to interesting the community in the education of the deaf. People said that it was useless, and that there were not enough deaf-

mutes to be worthy of consideration. The answer to the first was in the work already done abroad; to the second a reply was given by applying for statistics to the General Association of Congregational Clergymen, which met at Sharon, in June, 1812. That was in the governorship of John Cotton Smith, and I like to think of this preliminary discussion of a great enterprise and charity as taking place within the spacious rooms of that fine old



*Mason F. Cogswell*

monument of the colonial builder's taste and skill, the John Cotton Smith house.

The Association informed Dr. Cogswell of eighty-four deaf and dumb persons then living within the borders of Connecticut. In that proportion, there must have been about four hundred in the New England states, and about two thousand in the whole country.

Evidently, Dr. Cogswell's ministrations to the suffering brought a rich harvest when he was in need of help, for he

quickly succeeded in arousing the desired zeal among his influential friends, and on April 13, 1815, some of them were invited to meet at his house to discuss sending some one abroad to study methods and to bring home the knowledge necessary for carrying on a school for the deaf and dumb. The names have been preserved: "Ward Woodbridge, Esq., Daniel Wadsworth, Esq., Henry Hudson, Esq., Hon. Nathaniel Terry, John Caldwell, Esq., Daniel Buck, Esq., Joseph Battell, Esq. (of Norfolk), Rev. Nathan Strong, D. D., and Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet."

The committee appointed by these gentlemen to select an envoy, and collect the means for his expenses, consisted of Dr. Cogswell, and Mr. Ward Woodbridge, the latter being a prominent man in business circles. Hartford citizens responded so heartily to the call that in one day Mr. Woodbridge received subscriptions sufficient to defray the expenses of the mission.

That old subscription list is very characteristic of persons and places then and there. Sometimes you see the proof of personal friendship; sometimes of an especial effort aroused by an especial appeal, and again of the broad generosity of rich men who were ready to give to every good object.

Mr. Gallaudet and Dr. Cogswell subscribed largely—we can understand that real affection lay behind the sums given by "Lydia Huntley" and "Miss Lydia Huntley's School." There, too, is the name of Leonard Bacon, into whose hands the diary afterwards came—the Rev. Benoni Upson of the village of Berlin gave of his store one hundred dollars, Gov. John Cotton Smith showed in like manner the effect of the talk in Sharon, and there is the name so familiar as that of a generous giver, Joseph Battell, of Norfolk. The largest individual subscription from Hartford was that of Daniel

Wadsworth, and the next in value was by Chauncey Deming, of the neighboring village of Farmington, then one of the richest towns in the state. In fact among the churches of Connecticut, that of Farmington kept step with the cities, being barely exceeded by one in New Haven. And the scattered families of East Windsor were moved to great generosity. In curious sequence is the fact that from that town came one of the oldest and foremost instructors of mutes, one who at the persuasion of Dr. Gallaudet gave the zeal and devotion of his life to the work—Professor David Ely Bartlett. We can see the evidence of the family interest in Norwich, too. When the subscription was extended to Massachusetts, the list showed such names as Parkman, Appleton, Channing, Sears, Shaw, and Phillips. The state of Pennsylvania sent its contribution to the cause by Richard Paxton. In New York, few gave because there was a desire to have a separate school there, but among the few John Jacob Astor was prominent. Apparently, Albany was deeply interested, Stephen Van Rensselaer leading. Several schools in New Jersey sent their gifts, and there is a record of fifty cents from "a little girl." We hope that she was always blessed with means for gratifying her charitable impulses so early shown. And in other lands, from France to the Isle of Trinidad, kind hearts were touched. Among the English givers were "Mrs. Hannah More," and Zachary Macaulay, the great promoter of the abolition of slavery in the English colonies, and the father of Lord Macaulay.

And now, the way having been prepared, who should go on this errand? Several friends had endeavored to impart some instruction to the speechless Alice, among them the gifted poet of Hartford, Lydia Huntley, afterwards Mrs. Sigourney, and

all were sure that a bright mind lay behind the bars of silence. Mrs. Sigourney afterwards wrote a charming sketch of the character and the early school days of her famous pupil, and published it in "Letters to My Pupils."

Of all these friends and teachers, the young clergyman, Thomas Gallaudet, a graduate of Yale and Andover, had been most successful in establishing communication by signs. He was a neighbor, and while at home on a vacation, he made his first effort in teaching a deaf mute. He saw the little girl at play with other children, in his father's garden, and taking much interest in her, he succeeded, in that first lesson, in teaching her that the written word "hat" meant the very article of head-gear which he held in his hand. From that he had gradually gone on to some simple sentences.

Mr. Gallaudet was asked to undertake the enterprise in question; he accepted, promising to "visit Europe for the sake of qualifying himself to become a teacher of the deaf and dumb in this country." He brought back with him, after some months, a French mute of scholarly training and noble character, a professor in the French institution, Laurent Clerc. The career of each of these men in their special field of well-doing is well-known.

In M. Clerc's account of his coming to the United States, he says, "We alighted at Dr. Cogswell's in Prospect street. Alice was immediately sent for, and when she made her appearance, I beheld a very interesting little girl. She had one of the most intelligent countenances that I ever saw. I had left many persons and objects in France endeared to me by association—and I sometimes regretted leaving my native land; but on seeing Alice, I had only to recur to the object which had induced me to seek these shores, and sadness was subdued by an approving conscience."

During Mr. Gallaudet's absence the proper business was transacted, and thus was incorporated, in 1816, in Hartford, the "Connecticut Asylum for the education of deaf and dumb persons," the first institution of the kind in this country. The name was afterwards changed to the "American Asylum for the Deaf."

Little Alice Cogswell was the first pupil, and in 1817, it was formally opened with a class of three, increasing in three days to seven, in the south part of the building afterwards known as the City Hotel. A great crowd assembled on the following Sunday evening in the Center Church, to hear Mr. Gallaudet preach from the text, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue shall sing, etc." The seven unhearing pupils were there, little knowing what hopes were fixed on their new opportunity for progress, and undoubtedly trying to make good use of their eyes, and wondering why they had suddenly become the center of observation. In a little more than a year, the number of pupils had increased to between fifty and sixty; soon the New England states arranged to share the benefits and to contribute towards the expenses of the new institution, which was attracting scholars from all over the Union; and in a few years, teachers had gone out from it to establish other schools for the deaf and dumb in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, and other states, so that the Hartford school has been the parent of that illustrious family of American schools for the deaf which are "universally acknowledged to be the best of their kind."

Such have been some of the beneficent and ever-increasing results of the life in Hartford of our young traveler.

Besides Alice, his children were, Mary (Mrs. Lewis Weld), Elizabeth (Mrs. John



T. Norton of Farmington), Mason F. Cogswell, M. D. of Albany, and Catharine Ledyard (Mrs. Cortlandt Van Rensselaer.)

He died of pneumonia, December 17, 1830, in the seventieth year of his age. Dr. Bacon says, "The illness which ended his life was short—only five days, yet long enough for the whole city to be moved with anxiety. I am informed by one who lived in the immediate neighborhood, that late in the evening of the two days preceding his death, people stood in groups along the sidewalks of Prospect street, waiting for the physicians to come from his bedside, and asking in whispers for the latest indications." Miss Catherine Beecher's words in a letter expressed the general sentiment: "He is gone, our friend—our adviser—our help and comforter both in sickness and health;—it

would seem as if the whole place were in tears at his death; there is scarcely a family that does not feel that it has not lost a friend." To Alice, the darling of her father, this grief was a death-blow. For thirteen days she survived, shaken in body and mind by the loss of one who had been the unfailing support and protection of her maimed life. As she said, "Her heart had grown so close to her father's that they could not be separated." In her melancholy wanderings she asked, "Is it David's harp I hear?" and again, exclaimed "Oh, when I arrive at Heaven's gate, how my father will hold out his arms to take me to his bosom!"

Such are some of the things that may be read between the lines of the faded diary written in 1787.

## INSPIRATION.

BY HERBERT RANDALL.

To walk with Nature hand in hand,  
A heart attuned in thee  
To stormy-wind, the skylark's song,  
Or cadence of the sea;

To feel the soul upmount to where  
The trembling pleiads shine,—  
This is to leave the finite world  
And live with the Divine.







Accession no. 24401

Author Cogswell:  
Extracts from the  
diary ...  
[1900]

Call no. Biog.

~~C659~~

1900

